



# FTA Discretionary Grant Writing Workshop

February 15, 2023



# Today's Workshop

- Workshop will be recorded and posted on DRPT's YouTube channel
- Questions will be taken as they come in. Please use the chat function to enter your question(s)
- At 11:00AM there will be a 5 min break
- Slides will be distributed to participants after the workshop concludes
- Please contact us if you have any follow-up questions and/or need assistance!

# DRPT Workshop Team



**Tiffany Dubinsky**  
Statewide Transit Planning Manager  
DRPT



**Grant Sparks**  
Director of Transit Planning  
DRPT



**Dan Sonenklar**  
Statewide Transit Planning Manager  
DRPT

# Workshop Agenda

## Why Apply for Federal Discretionary Funds?

- *Incentives for Virginia transit agencies*

## FTA Discretionary Program Basics

- *Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)*
- *Navigating Grants.gov*
- *FTA Buses & Bus Facilities 101*
- *FTA Low-No 101*

## DRPT Grant Writing Technical Assistance

- *Project development*
- *Grant writing*
- *Narrative reviews*
- *Letters of support*

## Building a Competitive Application

- *FTA evaluation approach*
- *Program pre-requisites*
- *Administration priorities*
- *Supplemental Form*
- *Other considerations*
  - *State/Local match*
  - *Project scalability*
  - *Supporting documentation*

## Questions/Discussion

- *Q&A*

# Why Apply for Federal Discretionary Funds?



# Incentives for Virginia Transit Agencies

- ✓ Discretionary funds allow limited funding for transit to go further
- ✓ A “win” for any Virginia transit agency benefits every agency in the Commonwealth
- ✓ Positive media coverage and public perception
- ✓ CTB policy now allows for a **reduced local match** requirement for transit agencies who successfully secure FTA discretionary funding on capital projects (previously a 4% local match minimum)
- ✓ DRPT will now set aside capital funding to be used as a match



**Federal Transit  
Administration**

# Incentives for Virginia Transit Agencies

## Example Urban Project: Replace 10 buses Total Cost: \$5.5M

Typical Budget

Federal 5307	State	Local	Total
\$1,540,000	\$3,740,000	\$220,000	\$5,500,000
28%	68%	4%	100%

Budget w/ FTA  
Discretionary

Federal 5339b/c	State	Local	Total
\$4,400,000	\$990,000	\$110,000	\$5,500,000
80%	18%	2%	100%

# Incentives for Virginia Transit Agencies

## Example Urban/Rural Project: Facility Replacement/Renovation Total Cost: \$10M

Typical Budget

Federal 5307/5311	State	Local	Total
\$4,600,000	\$5,000,000	\$400,000	\$10,000,000
46%	50%	4%	100%

Budget w/ FTA  
Discretionary

Federal 5339b/c	State	Local	Total
\$8,000,000	\$1,800,000	\$200,000	\$10,000,000
80%	18%	2%	100%



# FTA Discretionary Program Basics

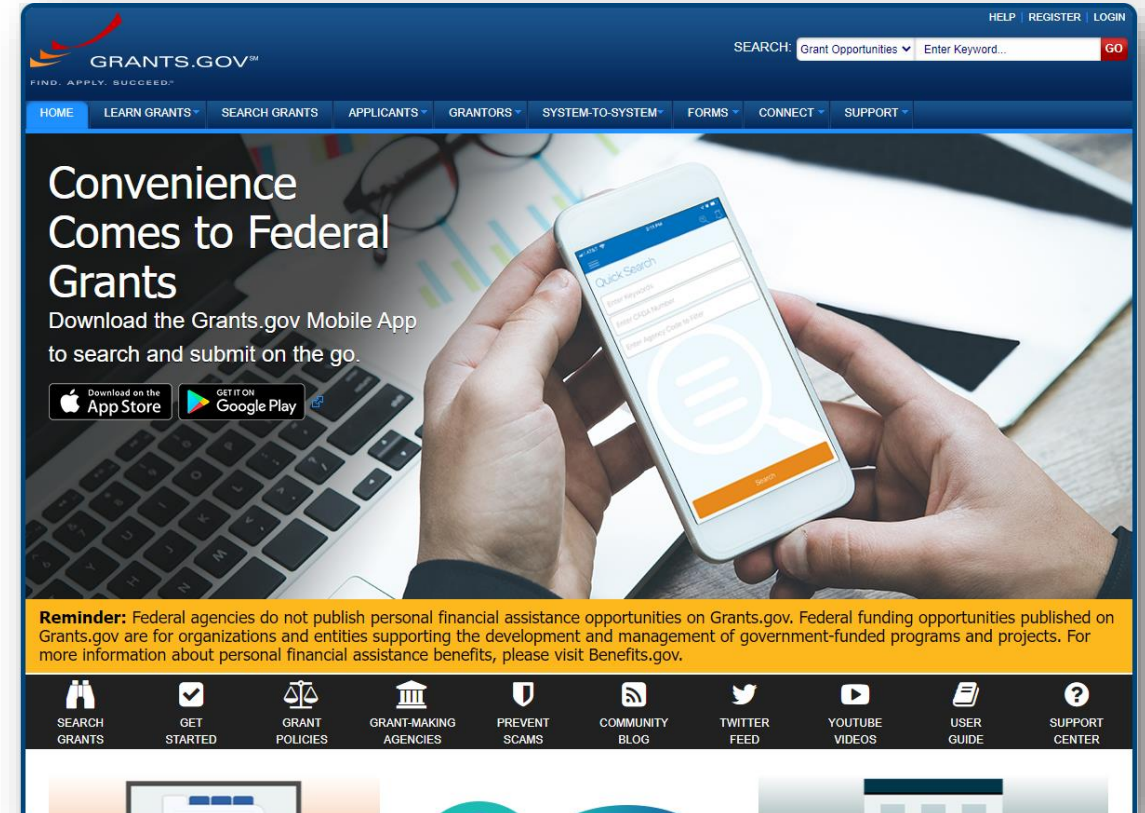
# Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

## NOTICE OF FUNDING

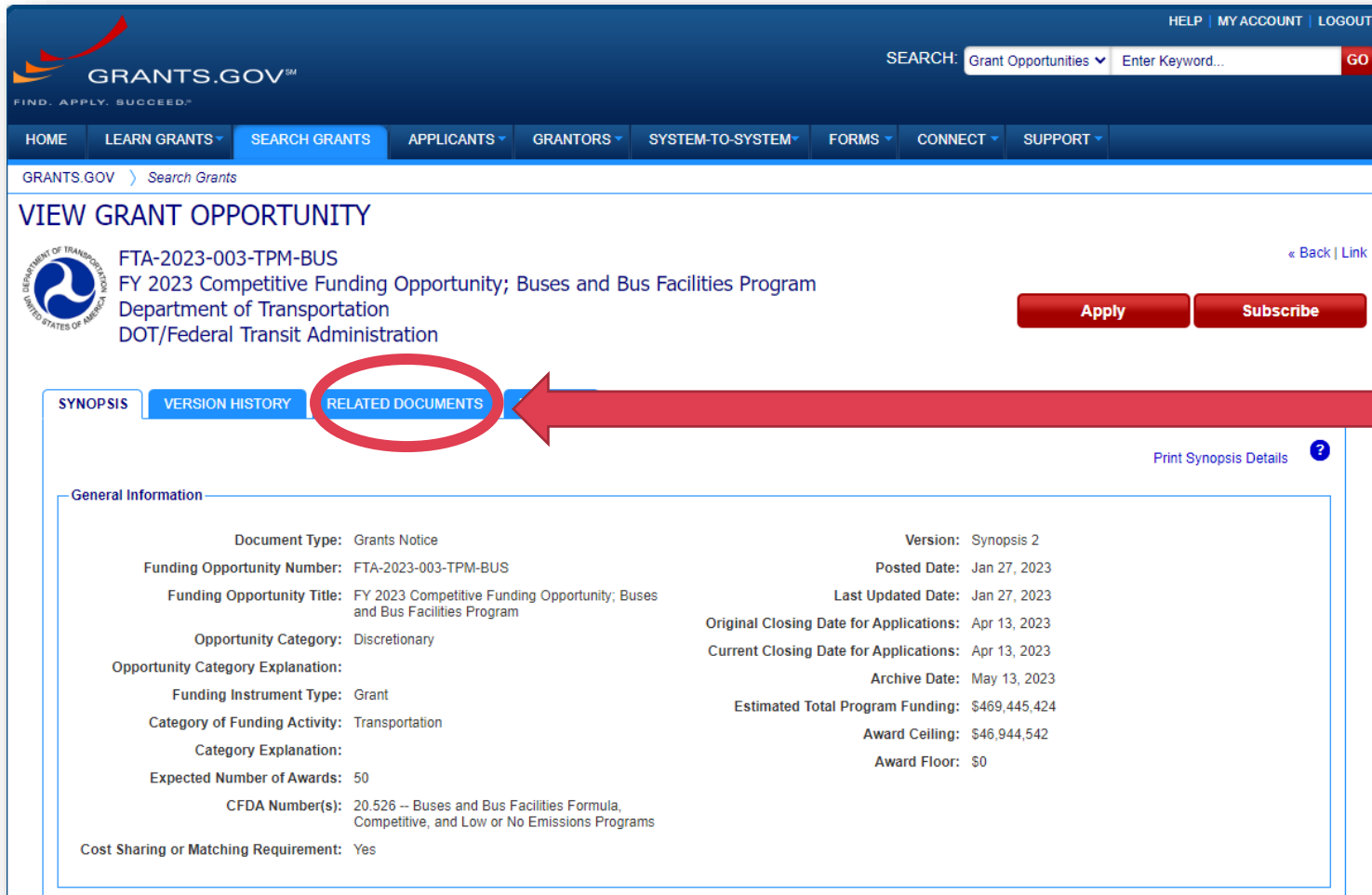
- FTA announces discretionary grant programs through a NOFO, which can be found on the FTA website and Grants.gov
- NOFOs include:
  - *Grant program summary*
  - *Eligibility*
  - *Match requirements*
  - *Application requirements*
  - *Selection process*
  - *FTA contact info*
  - *Submission process (Grants.gov)*
- FTA released a joint NOFO for both programs on January 27<sup>th</sup>
- Requirement to announce NOFO within 30 days of full federal budget approval

# Navigating Grants.gov

- Agency registration
- Opportunity numbers:
  - Buses and Bus Facilities (FTA-2023-003-TPM-BUS)
  - Low-No (FTA-2023-002-TPM-LWNO)
- Workspace creation
  - 3 required submission docs:
    - SF-424
    - Lobbying Form
- Attachments Form (must attach the Supplemental Form)
  - Maximum 15 attachments
- **IMPORTANT: The Supplemental Form is found on the 'Grant Opportunity' page, not in the Workspace**



# Navigating Grants.gov



GRANTS.GOV<sup>SM</sup>  
FIND. APPLY. SUCCEED.<sup>SM</sup>

HELP | MY ACCOUNT | LOGOUT

SEARCH: Grant Opportunities ▾ Enter Keyword... GO

HOME | LEARN GRANTS ▾ | SEARCH GRANTS | APPLICANTS ▾ | GRANTORS ▾ | SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM ▾ | FORMS ▾ | CONNECT ▾ | SUPPORT ▾

GRANTS.GOV > Search Grants

## VIEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY

« Back | Link

FTA-2023-003-TPM-BUS  
FY 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity; Buses and Bus Facilities Program  
Department of Transportation  
DOT/Federal Transit Administration

Apply Subscribe

SYNOPSIS | VERSION HISTORY | **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Print Synopsis Details ?

### General Information

Document Type:	Grants Notice	Version:	Synopsis 2
Funding Opportunity Number:	FTA-2023-003-TPM-BUS	Posted Date:	Jan 27, 2023
Funding Opportunity Title:	FY 2023 Competitive Funding Opportunity; Buses and Bus Facilities Program	Last Updated Date:	Jan 27, 2023
Opportunity Category:	Discretionary	Original Closing Date for Applications:	Apr 13, 2023
Opportunity Category Explanation:		Current Closing Date for Applications:	Apr 13, 2023
Funding Instrument Type:	Grant	Archive Date:	May 13, 2023
Category of Funding Activity:	Transportation	Estimated Total Program Funding:	\$469,445,424
Category Explanation:		Award Ceiling:	\$46,944,542
Expected Number of Awards:	50	Award Floor:	\$0
CFDA Number(s):	20.526 -- Buses and Bus Facilities Formula, Competitive, and Low or No Emissions Programs		
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement:	Yes		

- The Supplemental Form should be downloaded from the 'Grant Opportunity' page and saved locally
- This is the form where applicants are required to describe the need for the project, anticipated project benefits, etc.
- Upon submission, applicants should include the Supplemental Form as an attachment on the Attachments Form

# Navigating Grants.gov

Validate Form

FY 2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program

Applicant and Proposal Profile

Is this a resubmission due to an invalid/error message from FTA? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is this application for:  
(If applying to both programs, please check both boxes)

☐ Low-No (FTA-2023-002-TPM-LWNO)  
☐ Buses and Bus Facilities (FTA-2023-003-TPM-BUS)

Note: If applying to both programs, applicants should enter information for both programs on this form but **Must** submit the application package including the Supplemental Form and attachments, to Each respective Opportunity ID on Grants.gov for each program. That is, complete one form, but submit it to both programs in Grants.gov.

Section I. Applicant Information (NOFO Section C.1)

Organization Legal Name:

FTA Recipient ID Number:

Organization Chief Executive Officer:  
(name and direct phone number)

Applicant Eligibility:

☐ Direct or Designated Recipient

☐ State

☐ Local Governmental Authority

☐ Federally-Recognized Indian Tribe

Project Location  
(as of 2010 Census):

☐ Large Urbanized Area (200,000+ people)

☐ Small Urbanized Area (50,000-199,999 people)

☐ Rural (less than 50,000 people)

Congressional Districts (Project Location)

Congressional District

Insert Item

Section II. Project Information (NOFO Section C.3 and D.2.6)

About the Project

Project Title:  
(descriptive title of this project)

Project Executive Summary:

Propulsion Type (note: for facility projects, please select the predominant propulsion type used at the facility):

☐ Battery electric\*

☐ CNG

☐ Diesel

☐ Diesel-electric hybrid

☐ Gasoline

☐ Hydrogen fuel cell\*

☐ Other

If Other, specify:

\*Battery electric vehicles, hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, or facility projects for those types of vehicles are considered zero-emission projects; the applicant must address whether it is using 5% of funding for workforce development training in the Project Budget section and include a Zero-Emission Transition Plan.

Section III. Evaluation Criteria (NOFO Section E)

\*\*\* Address each of the evaluation criteria as described in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.\*\*\*

Demonstration of Need

Demonstration of Benefits

Note: If applying to both programs, be sure to select "yes" and provide a response to both questions below.

Is this application for the Low-No program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please describe how the proposed project will support the statutory requirements of the Low-No Program (See 49 U.S.C. 5339(c)(5)(A)):

Applicant and Proposal Form - FY 2023 Low or No Emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program

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VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

# Navigating Grants.gov

- Create a workspace ASAP to confirm that everything in Grants.gov is working properly
- Determine which staff have the permissions to submit an application and notify them in advance
- Submit application a couple days before deadline to avoid technical glitches

The screenshot shows the 'MANAGE WORKSPACE' page on Grants.gov. The top navigation bar includes links for HOME, LEARN GRANTS, SEARCH GRANTS, APPLICANTS (selected), GRANTORS, SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM, FORMS, CONNECT, and SUPPORT. A search bar is located on the right. The main content area displays the workspace details for 'FTA-2023-003-TPM-BUS - PKG00279485'. The workspace is in 'In Progress' status, owned by 'Grant A Sparks'. A progress bar at the top shows stages: Created (checked), Fill Out Forms (active), Complete and Notify AOR, Submit, and Agency Received. Below the workspace details, there are tabs for FORMS, VIEW APPLICATION, ATTACHMENTS, PARTICIPANTS, ACTIVITY, and DETAILS. The 'Workspace Actions' section includes buttons for 'Check Application', 'Sign and Submit', and 'Delete'. A table titled 'Application Package Forms' lists the forms included in the package, their requirements, status, and actions.

Include in Package	Form Name (Click to Edit)	Requirement	Form Status	Last Updated Date/Time	Locked By	Actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SF424 Mandatory Form [V3.0]	Mandatory	---	---	---	Lock   Download   Upload   Reuse   Webform
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grants.gov Lobbying Form [V1.1] <b>READ-ONLY</b>	Mandatory	---	---	---	Lock   Download   Upload   Reuse   Webform
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Attachments [V1.2]	Mandatory	In Progress [Locked]	---	Grant A Sparks	Unlock   Download   Upload   Reuse   Webform



# FTA Discretionary Program Basics

## Buses and Bus Facilities (5339b)

Eligible projects:

- Facility rehabilitation or construction
- Bus replacements or expansions
- Related equipment



## Low-No (5339c)

Eligible projects:

- Zero-emission buses (electric or hydrogen)
- Low-emission buses (CNG, Hybrid, Propane)
- Supporting facilities or equipment



# FTA Discretionary Program Basics

## Eligible Applicants:

1. FTA designated recipients
2. States
3. Local government authorities
4. Transit agencies
5. Tribes

Note: All rural applications must be submitted by the State

## Match Requirements:

- 80% max federal share
- In-kind match allowable but typically reserved for facilities



# Other Program Requirements

## **Submission and Awards:**

- Applications for both programs are due on April 13, 2023
- Applications may be submitted to both programs, but a separate application package will be needed for each (FTA encouraged applications to both programs for any projects that have dual eligibility)
- FTA must announce awards no later than June 27, 2023

## **Special Requirements:**

- Minimum 25% of Low-No program funding must go to low-emission projects (CNG, Propane, Hybrid)
- Minimum 5% of Low-No project budgets must include workforce development activities (training, etc.)
- All Low-No projects must include a Fleet Transition Plan
- Minimum 15% of Buses and Bus Facilities funding must go to rural projects

# Buses and Bus Facilities 101

## FY22 Stats:

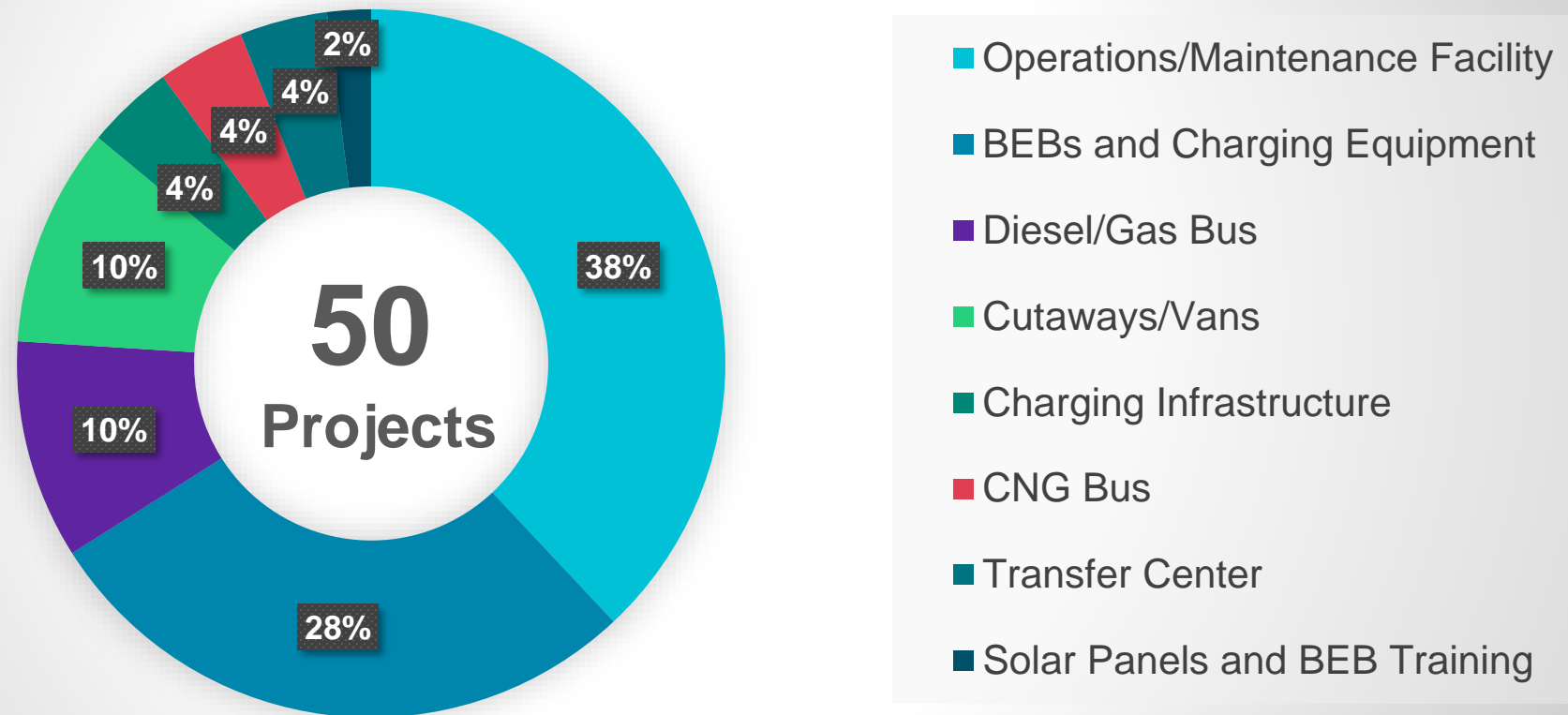
- 282 applications, \$3.7B requested
- FTA funded 50 projects (18%) for a total of \$551M
- Average award size: \$11M
- Award range: \$115K - \$54M
- Funding distribution:
  - Large Urban: 65%
  - Small Urban: 12%
  - Rural: 23%

**FY23: \$469M available**



# Buses and Bus Facilities 101

## FY22 Buses and Bus Facilities Funded Projects







# Low-No 101

## FY22 Stats:

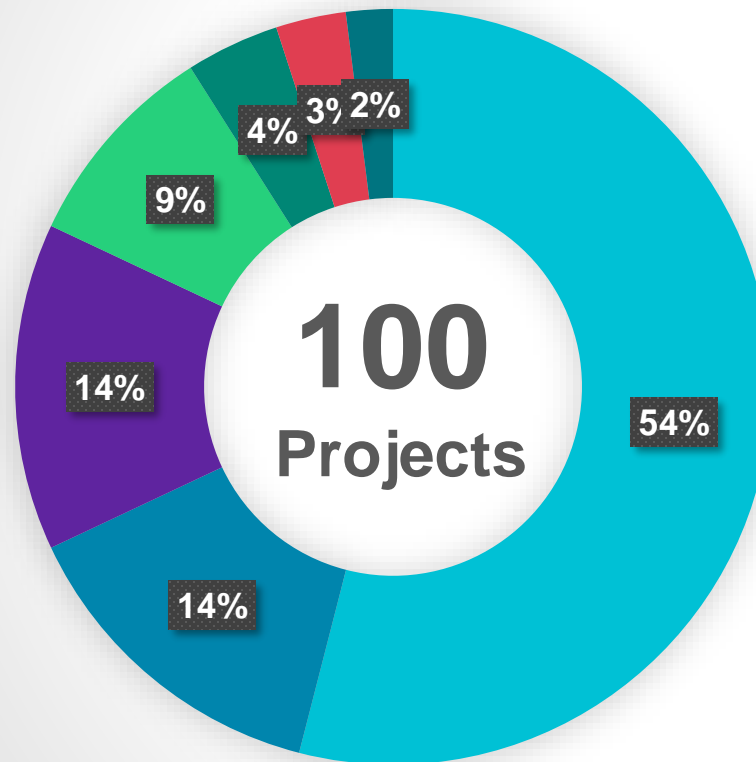
- 248 applications, \$4B requested
- FTA funded 100 projects (40%) for a total of \$1.1B
- Average award size: \$11M
- Award range: \$167K - \$116M
- Funding distribution:
  - Large Urban: 84%
  - Small Urban: 12%
  - Rural: 6%

**FY23: \$1.22B available**



# Low-No 101

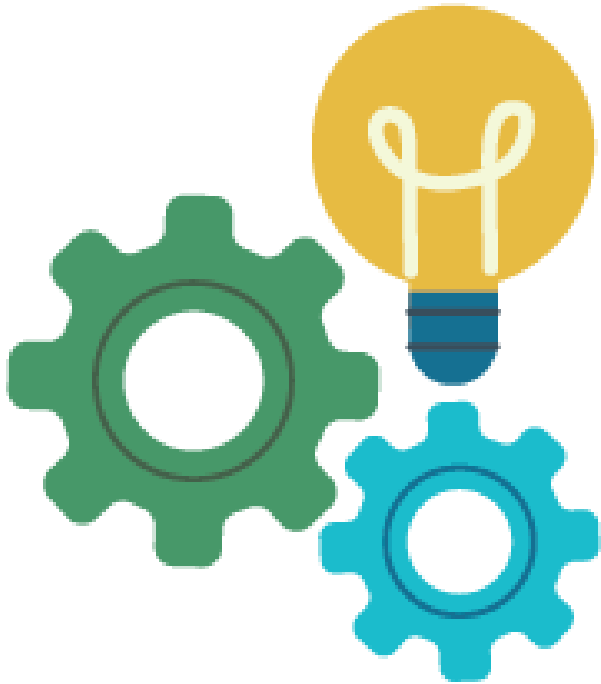
## FY22 Low-No Funded Projects



- BEBs
- Hybrid-Electric Buses
- CNG Buses
- Hydrogen Fuel Cell Buses
- Propane Buses
- Operation/Maintenance Facility
- Electric Vans

# DRPT Grant Writing Technical Assistance

# Grant Writing Technical Assistance



DRPT staff are available to assist transit agencies with the development of their applications

- Walkthrough of Grants.gov and submission process
- Identifying viable and competitive projects
- Budget and narrative development
- Transition Plan development
- Final application review and feedback before submission
- Letters of Support

# Building a Competitive Application

# Application Organization



## Attachment 1: Supplemental Form



## Attachment 2: Supplemental Form – Designed Version **[Recommended]**



## Additional Attachments (Limit - 15):

- Letters of Support **[HIGHLY Recommended]**
- Multi-media – Photos, Videos, Etc. **(optional)**
- Detailed budget sheets **(optional)**
- Extended narrative on topic areas with short character counts **(optional)**



# FTA Evaluation Approach

- **Main Evaluation Criteria:**

- Addressed in Section III in Supplemental Form (described in Section E.2 of the NOFO)
- Demonstration of Benefits, Demonstration of Need, Planning and Local/ Regional Prioritization, Local Financial Commitment, Project Implementation, Technical/ Legal/ Financial Ability

- **Overall Rating System:**

- Highly Recommended, Recommended, Not Recommended
- With competitive programs, all applications should aim for Highly Recommended

- **How Overall Ratings are Assigned:**

- Highly recommended: At least 4 evaluation criteria receive individual criteria ratings of “Highly Recommended”
- Not recommended: 1 score of “not recommended” leads to overall not-recommended



# FTA Evaluation Approach

- With so many highly recommended projects, FTA also had to use additional “discretionary” elements of applications:
  - Administrative Priorities
  - Geographic Diversity
  - Diversity in the size of transit systems
  - Whether an applicant has received other prior awards
- In a competitive year, the impacts of the project in each of these categories will make the difference:  
FFY22 – 80% of applications were “Highly Recommended”

# FTA Evaluation Approach

- **Secondary Criteria - Administrative Priorities:**
  - Climate Change Impacts
  - Full Fleet Transition
  - Creation of Good-Paying Jobs
  - Procurement Methods
  - Zero-Emission Fleet Transition Plans
  - Justice40
- **NOTE: FTA has reorganized and streamlined the application for FFY23, so please be sure to download a new supplemental form when developing your application**

# FTA Evaluation Approach

**It is important to fill out all sections of the application as completely and thoroughly as possible**

**FTA looks at the application as a whole when making funding determinations.**

**DO NOT LEAVE ANY SECTION BLANK!**

A high-angle photograph of a red and white articulated bus driving on a paved road. The bus is moving away from the camera, showing its rear and side. It has 'WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY' and the number '51345' on its back. In the background, a train is visible on an elevated track. The image is partially framed by a purple circular graphic on the right side.

# Section I: Applicant Information

## **Includes:**

- Organization Legal Name
- FTA Recipient ID Number
- Organization Chief Executive Office
- Applicant Eligibility
- Project Location
- Description of Services Provided and Service Areas





## Section II: Project Information - Overview

### **Includes:**

- About the Project

# Section II: Project Information

- **About the Project –**
  - Project Title (200 char.)
  - Project Executive Summary (500 char.)
  - Propulsion Type (check box)
  - Project Type (check box)

## Notes:

- *Each of these questions are relatively straight forward*
- *Be sure to be concise and describe exactly what the project will do*
- *For the title – create something short but descriptive that lets FTA understand what the project is*
  - *For facilities, it is helpful if you include the name of the facility (if it has one) in the title*



# Section III:

## Evaluation Criteria - Overview

### Section Includes:

- Demonstration of Need
- Demonstration Benefits
- Planning/ Local and Regional Prioritization
- Local Financial Commitment
  - Project Budget
  - Project Scalability
- Project Implementation
  - Project Timeline
  - Partnership Provision
- Technical/ Legal/ Financial Capability



# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Demonstration of Need: (4000 char)**

**Notes:**

- *Develop a concise, and compelling narrative demonstrating the unmet need that this project will fulfill*
  - *For example:*
    - *Current safety needs that will address by project*
    - *Assets being at or beyond their useful life*
    - *Need for equipment to electrify*
    - *Address agency and community needs*
  - *Include enough documentation of project and needs*
- *Multi-media files can help bolster this part of the application*
  - *Any photographs, videos, or other media illustrating the needs addressed by the project go a long way*
  - *Please include these as attachments and include a reference in the narrative*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Demonstration of Need: (4000 char)**

**Notes:**

- *For vehicles:*
  - *Characteristics of vehicles to be replaced and vehicles to be purchased should be highlighted*
    - *For example: If buses are in poor state of repair it is hard to attract riders*
  - *Provide enough backup documentation to evaluate where replacement vehicles are in their useful life*
  - *Include data on maintenance frequency, failures, or other metrics that illustrate operational difficulties*
  - *FTA favors the replacement of vehicles that have already reached their useful life*
    - *Knowing it takes time to order vehicles is taken into account in the 'Project Implementation' section*
    - *The response can speak to this, but it is not prioritized when comparing to other applications*
- *For facilities:*
  - *Characteristics of facility to be built/replaced*
  - *Backup documentation to evaluate where the asset to be replaced is in its useful life*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Demonstration of Benefits: (4000 char)**

- Is this an application to the Low-No Program? (y/n)
  - Please describe the benefits of the proposed project per the statutory requirements of the Low-No Program
- Is this an application to the Buses and Bus Facilities Program? (y/n)
  - Please describe the benefits of the proposed project per the statutory requirements of the Buses and Bus Facilities Program

## **Notes:**

- *Develop a concise and compelling narrative demonstrating the benefits of the project once implemented*
- *If you are applying to one program, you will only need to provide one response*
- *If you are applying to both the Low/No Program and Buses and Bus Facilities Program, you will need to provide a separate response for each*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Demonstration of Benefits: (4000 char)**

- Is this an application to the Low-No Program? (y/n)
  - Please describe the benefits of the proposed project per the statutory requirements of the Low-No Program
- Is this an application to the Buses and Bus Facilities Program? (y/n)
  - Please describe the benefits of the proposed project per the statutory requirements of the Buses and Bus Facilities Program

## ***Notes:***

- *This should be different from the description of needs, but can address the needs highlighted*
  - *Include qualitative and quantitative information*
  - *Address improvement to system conditions*
  - *Address access and mobility benefits*
- *For Low/No Applications: Be sure to illustrate clear emissions reduction benefits*



# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Planning and Local/Regional Prioritization: (4000 char)**

**Notes:**

- *This section should refer to all relevant local, regional, and statewide planning documents that either mention the project or are consistent with the project goals*
- *Excerpts of entire sections that are relevant should be included as attachments*
  - *Recommendation: include all external references in one consolidated attachment to reduce the number of files uploaded*
- *Letters of Support from local, regional, and state entities responsible for planning and decision making are very important in the evaluation of this section*
  - *Get as many as possible!*
  - *State must provide a letter of support for any applications involving state aid*
  - *Recommendation: Provide a template letter of support to send to partners and a one-page project description*



# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Planning and Local/Regional Prioritization: (4000 char)**

**Notes:**

- *For Low/No Applications: Be sure to reference your agency's low/no emissions transition plan and include it as an attachment*
  - *Transition plans must include six elements:*
    1. *Fleet Management Plan and Strategy*
    2. *Financial Resource Availability*
    3. *Policy and Legislative Impacts*
    4. *Facility Evaluations*
    5. *Utility and Fuel Partnerships*
    6. *Workforce Impacts*
  - *Transition plans that are missing one or more of these elements will score lower in the evaluation of this section*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Local Financial Commitment: (4000 char)**

**Notes:**

- *For all projects: FTA is looking for the ability to obligate funds as quickly as possible*
  - *Good documentation of local funds helps provide evidence that the project can be implemented quickly*
- *Provide evidence of the appropriate local match*
  - *Identify source of “local” funds – this can be state, regional, and local funding sources*
- *Provide sufficient supporting documentation*
  - *Evidence that local funds are already obligated/ allocated to project*
  - *Evidence of account balances*
  - *Evidence of recurring funding – i.e. historic funding levels for local funding sources*
- *Tying the local financial commitment narrative back to the application elements is helpful*
- *Any assumed state funds do not have to be programmed in the current SYIP*
  - *DRPT can provide language on state funding*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Budget:**

- Table: Include Description of Line Items, Quantity, Federal Amount Requested, Local Match Amount, Other Federal Funds Used, Other Funding Sources, and Totals

***Notes:***

- *Very important piece of the application – be as clear as possible and include attachments as needed*
- *This table should be relatively high level:*
  - *Vehicles – Include separate line for each vehicle type*
  - *Facilities – budgets need to be more detailed; include a separate line item for large elements, but use your own discretion;*
- *In years past, FTA prioritized projects that were overmatched, but that was not the case in FFY22*
  - *Include up to an 80% federal match on all applications*
  - *If state funds will be needed to support the project, please reach out to DRPT to discuss*
  - *DRPT now offers a lower minimum local match rate for projects supported by discretionary funds*
- *More complete project budgets can be included as an additional attachment*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Budget:**

- Table: Include Description of Line Items, Quantity, Federal Amount Requested, Local Match Amount, Other Federal Funds Used, Other Funding Sources, and Totals

## **Notes:**

- *This table should summarize the breakdown of federal, local, and other funds needed to support the subject project*
  - *“Local Funds” in an FTA application refers to any matching funds for a project that are not federal – This could include state, regional, and local funding*
  - *If the project already has federal funds allocated, and this application is for additional federal funding:*
    - *Federal Amount: New federal funds being requested*
    - *Local Match: Combination of all matching funds (state, regional, local)*
    - *Other Federal: Existing federal allocation*
    - *Other: Existing matching funds (state, regional, local)*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Budget:**

**Example Table: \$15 Million Administrative and Maintenance Facility**

- \$10M already allocated – 80% federal, 20% state/local (\$8M, \$2M)
- \$5M additional needed – 80% federal, 20% state/local (\$4M, \$1M)

Description	Qty	Federal Amount Requested	Local Match Amount	Other Federal Funds	Other	Total
Admin/ Maintenance Facility	1	\$4,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$15,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$8,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$15,000,000</b>

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Scalability:**

- Is the project scope scalable? (yes/no)
- If yes, specify the minimum federal funds necessary (\$ amount)
- Provide an explanation of scalability (4000 char)

***Notes:***

- *Project scalability only comes into play when the FTA has evaluated the project and has decided to fund it but does not have enough available funding for all projects on the approved list*
- *This means your project is evaluated only once based on the needs and benefits of the whole project, and scalability comes into play at the end of the allocation process, where various funding scenarios are considered.*



# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Scalability:**

- Is the project scope scalable? (yes/no)
- If yes, specify the minimum federal funds necessary (\$ amount)
- Provide an explanation of scalability (4000 char)

**Notes:**

- *Minimum federal funds necessary –*
  - *If there are multiple scalability options, this should represent the new federal funding needed to for the lowest cost version*
- *Explanation of Scalability –*
  - *This should be a detailed breakdown of what would be included in scaled down version of the project, along with total costs and federal cost needs.*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Budget:**

- Does the project budget include funding for workforce development activities or training at the National Transit Institute (NTI)? (y/n)
- For zero emission projects, is 5% of the project budget for workforce development training as outlined in the applicant's Zero-Emission Transition Plan? (Low/ No only)

## **Notes:**

- *NTI Question – could be applicable to projects that include an element of training*
- *Workforce Development Question –*
  - *Bus/ Bus Facilities projects – “no” is fine; but including this could help the application according to FTA*
  - *For low/no – it is important that your transition plan and your application identify that 5% of project cost will go workforce development*
    - *This may take creative approach for particularly large or expensive projects*
    - *DRPT can help your agency think through this response on a case-by-case basis*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Implementation Strategy : (4000 char)**

- Can this project be obligated within 12 months? (y/n)

**Notes:**

- *Provide a narrative that summarized the project timeline and major milestones*
- *Includes key milestones and dates and demonstrate that critical dependencies are addressed:*
  1. *Board approvals needed*
  2. *Inclusion in administrative documents – TIP/ STIP*
  3. *Describe procurement process and timeline*
    - *State Vehicle Contract – Transit already have federally compliant procurement for vehicles*
  4. *Describe whether additional engineering and design is needed*
  5. *Environmental approvals needed – NEPA or CQUA*
    - *Articulate if Environmental approvals are not needed; Mention categorical exclusions if applicable*
- *Highlight any partnerships needed to implement the project*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Timeline:**

- Table with: Timeline Item Description and Timeline Item Date

***Notes:***

- *The schedule should be detailed enough to understand the general parameters and milestones associated with the project, but does not need to include every step*
- *The schedule should demonstrate that the project funds can be fully obligated within 12 months*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Partnership Provision:**

- Is this application a partnership between an eligible applicant and one or more partners? (4000 char)

**Notes:**

- *The partnership provision only applies to Low/No projects*
- *If a partner is named in the application to Low/No, recipients can avoid competitive bidding for the partner's services*
- *Types of work that partners can do:*
  - *Operational analysis and planning*
  - *Utility support*
  - *Other pre-deployment analysis*
- *DRPT Assistance – Pre-deployment work can utilize members of our bench contractors*

# Section III: Evaluation Criteria

- **Technical, Legal, and Financial Capacity: (4000 char)**

**Notes:**

- *Judged on a Pass/ Fail basis*
- *Reference triennial review*
- *Demonstrate capacity to execute such a project*
- *It is not necessary to provide all 4000 characters for this response, however, please be sure to elaborate enough to adequately demonstrate capacity*
- *If you have had any technical, legal, or financial issues in the management of previous federal grants, please describe how your organization has addressed and overcome those issues*
  - *Please reach out to DRPT for advice as well*





# Section IV: Additional Considerations

## **Section Includes:**

- Climate Change
- Full Fleet Transition
- Create Good Paying Jobs
- Procurement Methods that Reduce Customization
- Zero-Emissions Fleet Transition Plan – Workforce Involvement
- Justice40

# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Climate Change:**

- Is this application requesting 20 or more zero emission 40-foot buses? (y/n)
- Applicants must input the amount of reductions per vehicle from the FY 2023 Bus and Low-No Emissions Reduction Calculator

**Notes:**

- *Short character count – Calculator results and any descriptions necessary*
- *Tools available:*
  - *Emissions Reduction Calculator: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/fy-2023-bus-and-low-no-emission-reduction-calculator>*

# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Full Fleet Transition:**

- If applicable, identify how the proposed project and fleet transition plan support the conversion of the agency's overall fleet to zero emissions: (500 char)

***Notes:***

- *Short character count – very brief description*
- *Include an additional attachment with more information if warranted*

# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Creating Good-Paying Jobs:**

- List of yes/no questions
- Please describe the use of apprentices and partnerships with workforce development programs that have supportive services: (500 Characters)

***Notes:***

- *This only applies to facility projects*
- *Short character count – very brief description of how the project will include apprentices and partnerships*
- *Include an additional attachment with more information if warranted*
- *This can reference design, engineering, and constructions jobs associated with the project*

# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Procurement Methods that Reduce Customization:**

- If applicable, identify the proposed approach, other partners if applicable, and how the procurement approach reduces vehicle customization. (500 char)

***Notes:***

- *New Question*
- *DRPT is seeking more information at this time*

# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Zero-Emission Fleet Transition Plan - Workforce Involvement:**
  - List of yes/no questions
  - Please describe

## **Notes:**

- *This only applies to low/ no project applications*
- *One of the 6 required elements of a transition plan*
- *Short character count – very brief description and reference to workforce section of transition plan*
- *Include an additional attachment with transition plan documents with a reference to the workforce elements of that plan*



# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Justice40**

**Notes:**

- *From USDOT: “Justice40 is an opportunity to address gaps in transportation infrastructure and public services by working toward the goal that many of our grants, programs, and initiatives allocate at least 40% of the benefits from federal investments to disadvantaged communities.”*
- *This section was brand new as of FFY22, and FTA is still determining the best use for it*
- *In FFY22 – this was evaluated as a simple pass/ fail check, and was not incorporated into the overall evaluation of projects*
- *USDOT wanted to see how applicants responded to create a way to better operationalize Justice40 requirements*
- *In future years, it may weigh in heavier when evaluating administrative priorities, so it’s important to answer completely*

# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Justice40 (cont'd)**

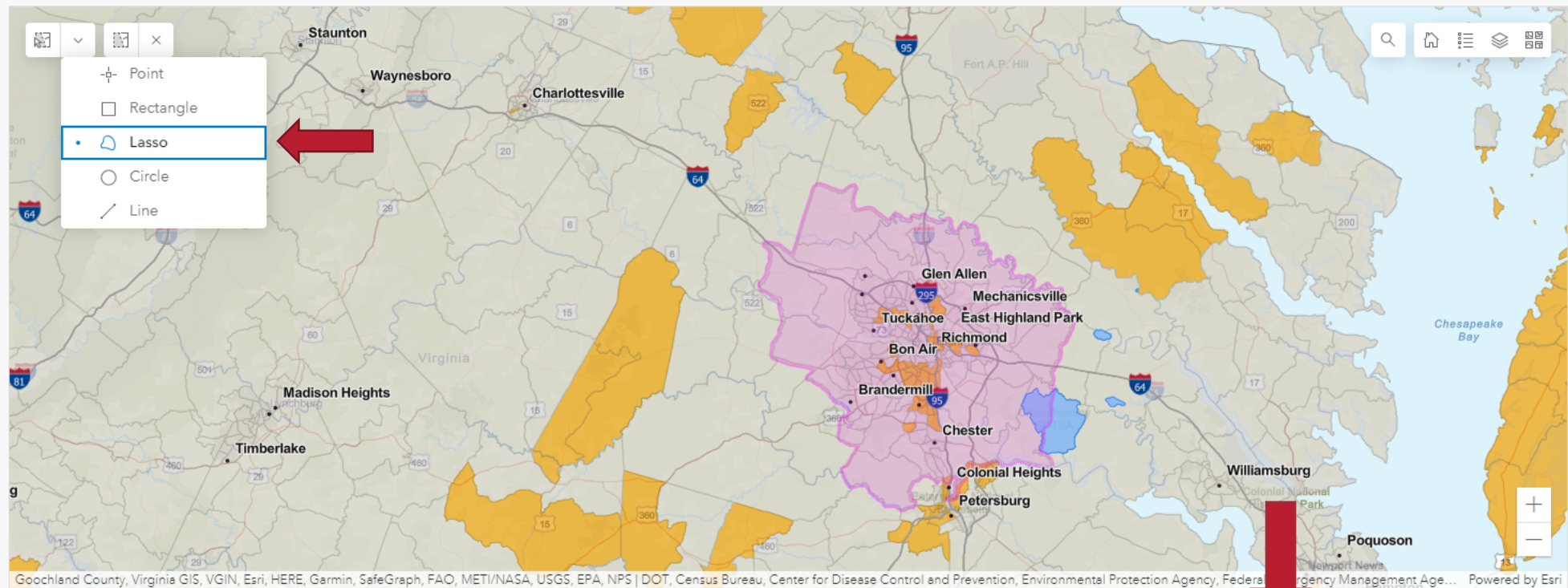
- Does the project support the Justice40 Initiative? (yes/no)
- Describe how the project supports the Justice40 Initiative and the benefits provided: (1000 Characters)
- Describe the methodology used to determine the project meets the Justice40 Initiative: (1000 Characters)
- What is the percentage of Disadvantaged Communities within the project area? (percentage)
- Was this estimate generated using the Justice40 online mapping tool? (yes/no)

**Notes:**

- *This should include a high-level summary of how the project supports the initiative, and a description of the methodology used to determine the level of impact*
- *Maps and other graphics should be included in a supplemental attachment*
- *Tools available:*
  - USDOT Mapping Tool: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a>
  - Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>

# Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts (Historically Disadvantaged Communities)

**User Instructions:** On the list to the right, select your state of interest. Use the +/- icons or mouse wheel to zoom into the map. Click and drag the map area to pan. Use the select tool on the left to select US Census tracts within your area of interest. Census tracts with four or more Transportation Disadvantage indicators will be visible in orange. Single-click on a Census tract to view the tract number and Transportation Disadvantage categories. The icon is the legend for the visible map layers. Use the home button to return to the continental US extent.



To view the **transportation disadvantaged definition**, select the expand icon in this box's upper right corner. Please note the Reconnecting Communities Notice of Funding Opportunity uses the "Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts" tool as one option for determining whether a community is "Economically...

## Transportation Disadvantaged Tracts by State

Select a state from the list

- Alabama: 601
- Alaska: 33
- American Samoa: 1
- Arizona: 519
- Arkansas: 357
- California: 4168
- Colorado: 208
- Connecticut: 32
- Delaware: 39
- District of Columbia: 31
- Florida: 1257
- Georgia: 861
- Guam: 1
- Hawaii: 33
- Idaho: 65
- Illinois: 867
- Indiana: 321

1 of 50  
VIRGINIA  
**219**  
Total Selected Census Tracts  
59

1 of 44  
VIRGINIA  
**44**  
Total Selected Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts

**20%**  
Percent of Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts In Selected Area

# Explore the map

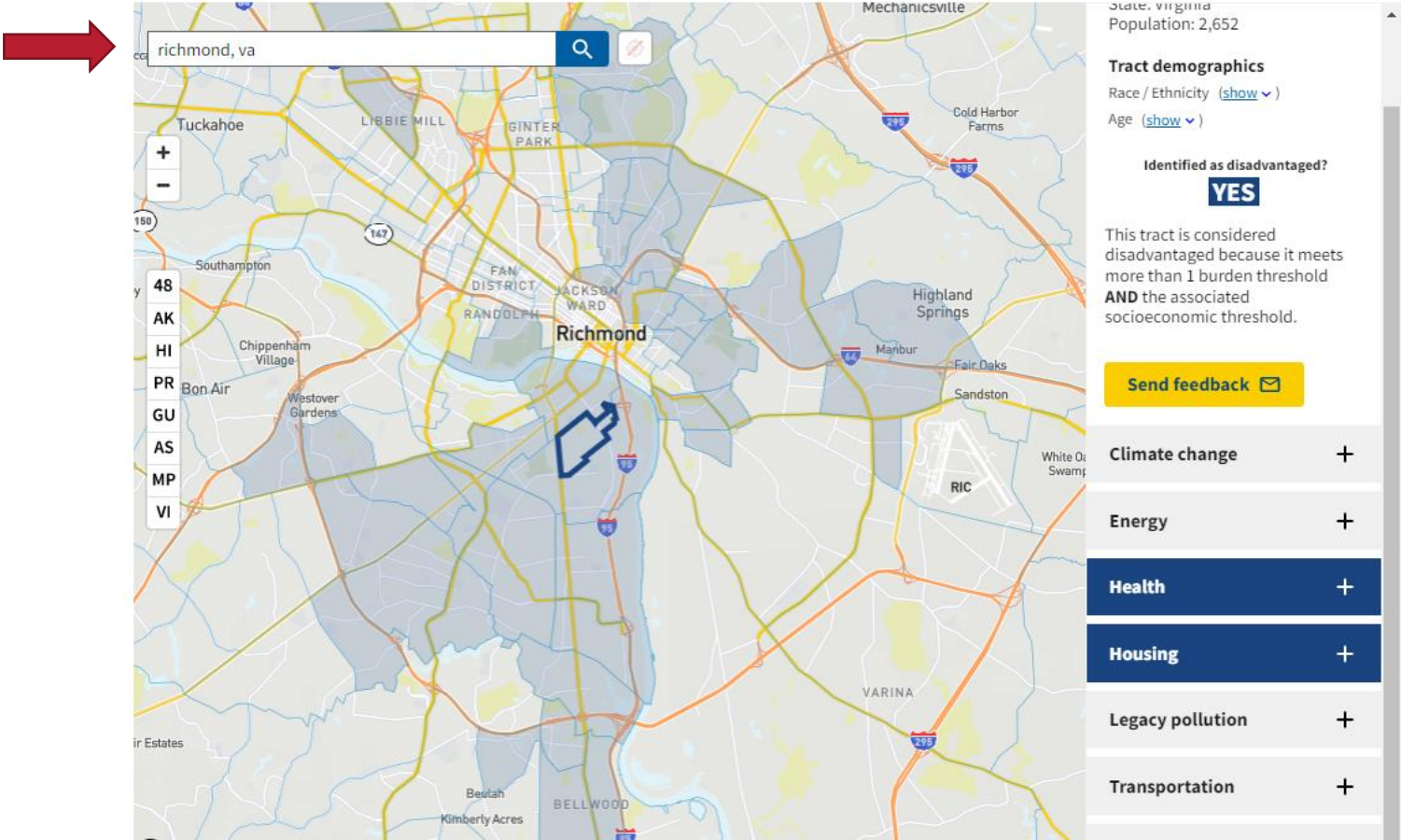
Public engagement

Census tracts that are overburdened and underserved are highlighted as being disadvantaged on the map. Federally Recognized Tribes, including Alaska Native Villages, are also considered disadvantaged communities.

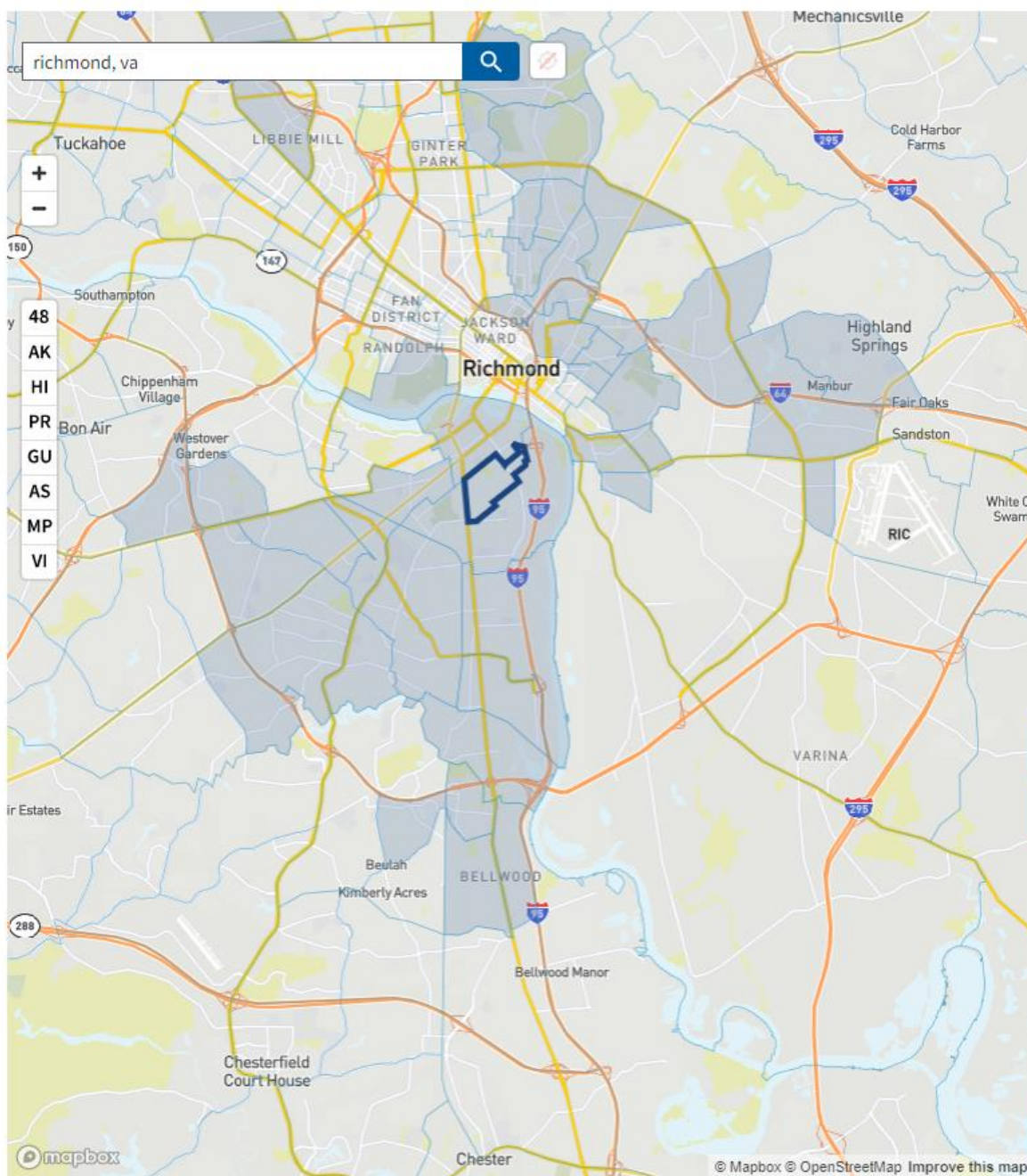
Zooming in and selecting shows information about each census tract.

Get the data

Download the data with documentation and shapefile from the [downloads](#) page.







#### Tract information

Number: 51760060200  
County: Richmond city  
State: Virginia  
Population: 2,652

#### Tract demographics

Race / Ethnicity ([show](#) ▾)  
Age ([show](#) ▾)

Identified as disadvantaged?

**YES**

This tract is considered disadvantaged because it meets more than 1 burden threshold **AND** the associated socioeconomic threshold.

[Send feedback](#) ✉

Climate change +

Energy +

**Health** +

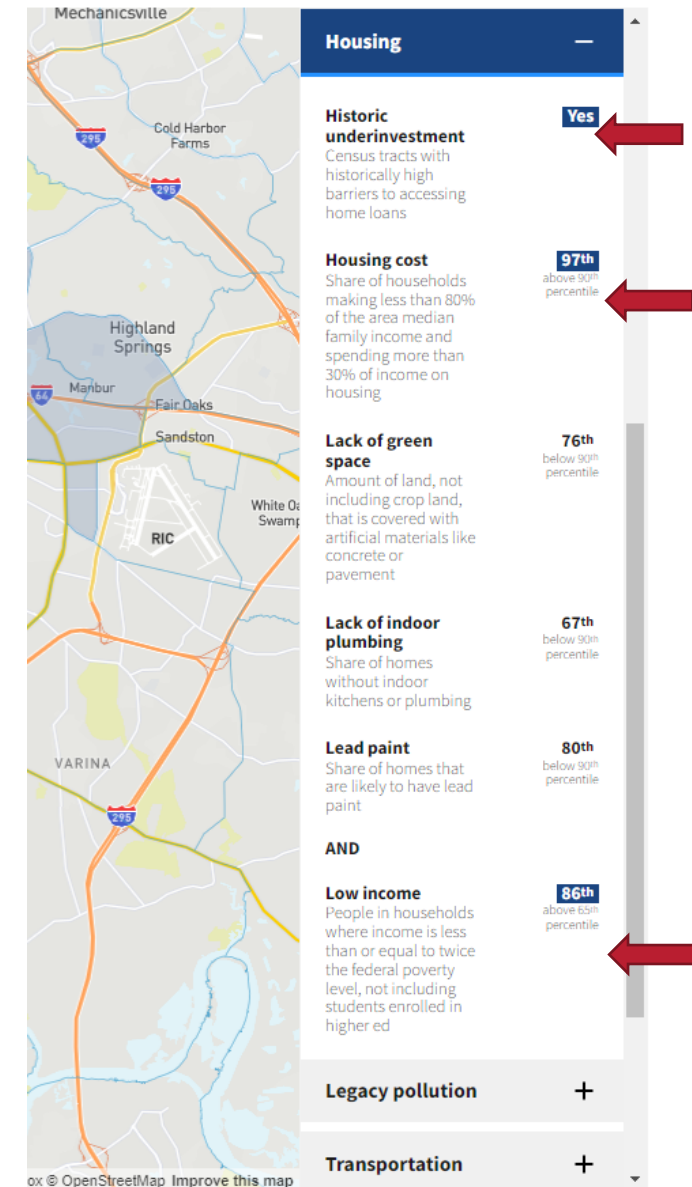
**Housing** +

Legacy pollution +

Transportation +

Water and wastewater +

**Workforce development** +



# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Justice40 (cont'd)**

- Describe how the project supports the Justice40 Initiative and the benefits provided: (1000 Characters)

**Example Response:**

*“This project will support the Justice40 initiative by deploying new transit in the Commonwealth, reducing emissions and making transit a more attractive, reliable option to riders. Of the census tracts included in the service areas of Agency A, 17% are considered disadvantaged according to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, and 8% are considered transportation disadvantaged according to USDOT mapping tool.*

*The demographic makeup of each of the service areas also indicates that this project would provide benefits to disadvantaged communities. Within the Agency A service area, minority groups make up 28% of the population, 5% have limited English proficiency (LEP), and 18% are low-income (under the federal poverty line). (See attachment 3)”*



# Section IV: Additional Considerations

- **Justice40 (cont'd)**

- Justice40 Populations Impacted – Table:
  - Justice40 Disadvantaged Community as Identified in the NOFO
  - Actual or Estimated Annual Ridership Count

**Notes:**

- *The description from the NOFO are quite general, leaving a lot up to the discretion of the applicant*
- *If your agency collects demographic data on riders, it would be best to include actual ridership counts by population group – Title VI populations, EJ populations, or others*
- *If your agency does not collect demographic data on riders, this can be estimated:*
  - *[Percentage of a population group in the service area] x [Total ridership from previous year]*

**Example  
Table:**

**Justice40 Population Impacted**

Justice40 Disadvantaged Community Served as Identified in the NOFO Section E.2	Actual or Estimated Annual Ridership Count
Minority	695,621 (24% of total ridership)
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	224,812 (8% of total ridership)
Low-Income (Poverty)	588,606 (21% of total ridership)

# Important Dates

## Low-No and Buses/ Bus Facilities FTA Applications Due: **April 13, 2023**

- **Reminder:** Please fill out “FTA Discretionary Assistance” Google Form by **February 21, 2023**
- Requests for Technical Assistance from DRPT: **March 1, 2023**
- Requests for a Letter of Support from DRPT: **Rolling Basis until Application Deadline**





# Staff Contacts

- Grant Sparks, Director of Transit Planning – [grant.sparks@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:grant.sparks@drpt.virginia.gov)
- Tiffany Dubinsky, Statewide Transit Planning Manager – [tiffany.dubinsky@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:tiffany.dubinsky@drpt.virginia.gov)
- Dan Sonenklar, Statewide Transit Planning Manager – [daniel.sonenklar@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:daniel.sonenklar@drpt.virginia.gov)

